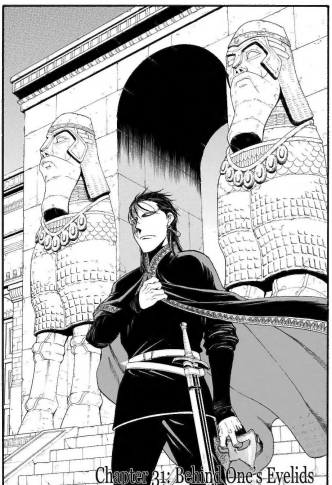
THE HEROIC LEGEND OF ARSLAN



Chapter 31: Behind One's Eyelids

KNOCK
THIS IS ALL PERSIMMON COOKING! NONE OF IT'S PRETTY GOOD!!
I'M EXHAUSTED FROM BEING ON THE MOVE DAY AND NIGHT!!
BRING ME SOMETHING THAT TASTES BETTER!!
Y-YES, SIR!!

YES, RIGHT AWAY!!
HAVEN'T YOU ANY SPIRITS ?!
DAMN LUSITANIAN MONKEY WON'T SHUT UP.
WHO IS GUISCARD ...?
NO DISCOURTESY WILL BE PARDONED!
I AM AN ENVOY OF DUKE GUISCARD!
I'M DYING TO GET BACK AND DRINK ECIBITANIA WINE.
DISGUSTING SPIRITS AND A DAMNABLY DULL VILLAGE.
MEH

S...
SIR!!
...

BAM
AH!
THERE IS NOTHING IN THAT ROOM!!
I KNOW! LET US SLAUGHTER A SHEEP! WE HAVE A GOOD, FAT SHEEP!!
CLATTER
CLATTER
WAIT-IS THIS, HONEY? YOU HID A DAUGHTER, DID YOU?

GRAB
COME HERE, GIRL!
YOU WILL COME TO MY BED.
WH... WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME...?
!!

!!

WHY SO FEARFUL? I WON'T KILL HER IF SHE DOES AS I SAY.
COME ALONG, NOW.
PLEASE, FORGIVE US!! SPARE HER. I BEG OF YOU!!
PLEASE, WAIT! SHE IS STILL BUT AN INNOCENT CHILD!
HER AGE MAKES NO DIFFERENCE. EVERYTHING IN PARIS NOW BELONGS TO LUSITANIA!

PRAY HAVE MERCY !!
SHE IS BLIND !!

I DON'T CARE...
...AS LONG AS SHE LOOKS GOOD TO MINE.
OHO...
THOSE EYES CANNOT SEE?

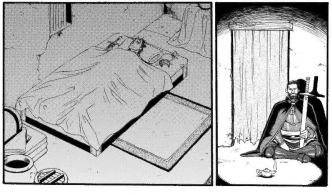
LET HER GO.
WHAT ARE YOU...
LET THE GIRL GO.
I THOUGHT THAT YALDABAOTH'S DEVOUT BELIEVERS ARE NOT TO BE BESOTTED WITH WOMEN. IS THAT NOT SO?
YOU ARE EXHAUSTED, YES?
TAP TAP
GO AND REST NOW— ALONE.

UNDER-
STOOD...
HI

THANK
YOU.
TH...

THANK
YOU!
...HE SAID
YOU ARE
BLIND?
THANK
YOU!
... YES,
I AM...

I, TOO, AM SLOWLY TO RETIRE.
PREPARE A ROOM.
SEE TO THE HORSES AS WELL.
YES, SIR !!
!?



...WHAT WAS THE POINT?

SAVING ONE VILLAGE GIRL NOW CHANGES NOTHING.

I'LL SO HAVE MY REASONS. AND THERE IS THE COUNTRY'S CIRCUMSTANCE TO CONSIDER, YET THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND AT ALL...
THE HOLY KNIGHTS TEMPLARY'S ARS EXCEEDINGLY IMPRITENT AND UNCOMPROMISING.

GUIS-CARD! MY BELOVED YOUNGER BROTHER!
WHAT AM I TO DO?

OHH, WHEN WILL I BE ABLE TO MASTERY MY TRAMEWAY?
BOOPIN AND HIS UNDERLINGS ARE INCOR-RIGIBLE.
DO THEY NOT FEEL AS THOUGH THEY HAVE PAY OBLIGA-TIONS?
THEY SHOULD KNOW JUST HOW MUCH I HAVE DEVOTED TO THE CHURCH UP UNTIL THIS POINT!
YOU'RE ONLY REVELLING THAT NOW?

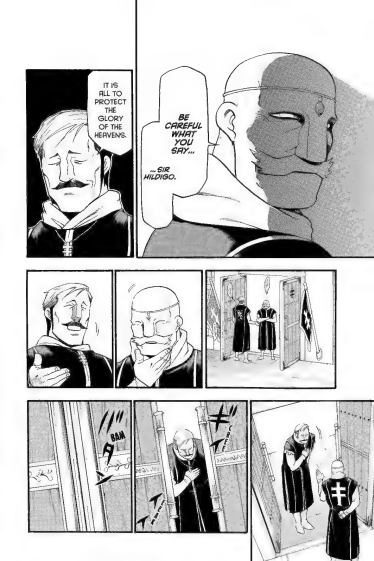
I SWEAR TO YALDA-BAOTH!
I HAVE NOT TOLD HER!
ELDER BROTHER, I HOPE YOU HAVEN'T TOLD TRAMEWAY THAT AMPRORORIS IS HERE, IN THE PALACE DUNGEONS!//

IF THE PARSIANS HAVE CERTAINTY THAT THEIR KING IS DEAD, THEY WOULD MAKE ARSLAN THEIR NEW KING. UNITING THE FORCES OPPOSING LUSITANIA WITHIN PARS.
?
GOOD.
SO YOU DO HAVE SOME SENSE.
BETTER TO REMAIN VAGUE AS TO WHETHER ANDRAGORAS IS ALIVE OR DEAD.
NOT TO MENTION TAHMINEH...
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT VIXEN IS PLOTTING. CAN'T DO ANYTHING RASH...

...YOUR HOLINESS?
SHALL WE GO INWARD AND TAKE HIS MAJESTY KING INNOCENTIS OFF THE THRONE...
THE KING REIGNS OVER THE FOLLOWERS OF YELDABIRTH AS A HOLY MAN...
BUT THE KING OF LUSITANIA RULES AS MORE THAN A SIMPLE MONARCH.
THAT WOULD BE A BIT OF AN OVERREACTION.
YES, BUT WHO WOULD YOU HAVE TAKE HIS PLACE ON THE THRONE?
LOVING AN INFIDEL MONARCH AS KING, AND AS A HOLY MAN, IT IS UNTHINKABLE.
HE IS A FAITHSTRIKING KING, BUT HE HAD AN EXEMPLARY RECORD UNTIL NOW.
HE HAS NO HEIRS, AND HIS CLOSEST KIN IS THAT DAMN GUISEPARD. WOULD YOU HAVE HIM BECOME KING?

THERE ARE THOSE BACK HOME IN LUSITANIA WHO ARE OF ROYAL BLOOD, ARE THERE NOT?
PRECISELY/ THAT DAMN GUISCARD PUTS HIS INFLUENCE AND WEALTH BEFORE THE WILL OF GOD/
I HAVE NO QUALMS WITH HIS HIGHNESS'S ABILITY, BUT HE WOULD BE EVEN MORE COMPROMISING WITH THE HERETIC'S TWIN HIS OLDER BROTHER.
HMM/
AS LONG AS THEY HAVE ROYAL BLOOD, ANYONE WILL DO, EVEN IF THEY ARE VERY YOUNG.
PERSONALLY, I DO NOT FIND IT VERY DESIRABLE FOR BOTH POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS POWER TO BE CENTERED SOLELY ON THE KING.
ALSO, YOUR HIGHNESS...
YES...
THERE'S AN EVEN...
A CHILD OR A BABE WOULD BE SIMPLE TO CONTROL.

IN THE EVENT THAT WE DEPOSE THE KING, WE SHOULD SEPARATE THE RELIGIOUS POWERS FROM THE THRONE COMPLETELY.
IF, AS HAS HAPPENED THIS TIME, THE KING WERE TO FORGET HIS PLACE, HIS THE SUPREME RELIGIOUS FIGURE, AND BE SWAYED BY THE TEMPTATIONS OF A HERETIC WOMAN, IT WOULD BE A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR THE FUTURE OF BOTH THE KINGDOM AND THE TEACHINGS OF YALDABAOTH.
AND THEN I BELIEVE THAT YOUR HOLINESS, THE ARCHBISHOP, SHOULD BECOME THE SUPREME LEADER OF THE CHURCH...
...THE GRAND PRIEST.


IT IS ALL TO PROTECT THE GLORY OF THE HEAVENS.
BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY...
...SIR HILDIGO.

TSK
TO THINK THAT HE WOULD NOT OFFER ME ANY GIFTS AFTER I SHOWED MYSELF SO WILLING TO BRIBE HIM...
DULL-WITTED BALD FOOL.
MARIYAM'S LANDS WERE INFERTILE, AND THERE WAS NO HOPE OF GETTING GOLD OR SILVER. THERE, THERE WAS VERY LITTLE TO BE HAD AT ALL.
IF I HAD SEEN THIS COMING, I WOULD HAVE JOINED THE ATTACK ON PARIS INSTEAD OF STOOPING IN MARIYAM.
DOES THAT DWARF BODYN INTEND TO NOT GIVE ME EVEN A SINGLE PIECE OF IT?
I HEARD THAT THE PARISIAN PALACE TREASURY DEFIES IMAGINATION.

I'VE COME ALL THIS WAY TO PARIS.
I'LL GET AS MUCH AS I CAN OUT OF IT.

HIS HOLINESS THE ARCHBISHOP IS GREATLY DISAPPOINTED IN KING INNOCENTIS.

HOWEVER, WHAT HAS HAPPENED AFTER THAT IS NOT.
HIS MAJESTY OVERTHREW TWO POWERFUL KINGDOMS, EXTENDING THE GLORY OF GOD TO THE EAST. THIS WAS GOOD.
MIR-YAM AND PARIS.

...
AND ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE, AT THAT! FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FOLLOWERS OF YALDABAOTH TO LOVE SUCH A WOMAN IS IMPROPER!
AN INFIDEL WOMAN!

IT WILL BE TOO LATE FOR US TO MEDIATE WITH THE ARCHBISHOP IF HE GROWS TO BE DISILLUSIONED/
IT IS LUCKY THAT HIS HOLINESS IS BUT DISAPPOINTED
DO YOU INTEND TO OFFER USEFUL ADVICE REGARDING MY BROTHER?
AND?

...WHO WOULD YOU THEN ENTRUST WITH THE RULING OF LUSITANIA?
IF, HYPOTHETICALLY, MY BROTHER WERE TO LOSE THE BACKING OF YOUR TEMPLARS, AND HIS REIGN TO END WITH EXCOMMUNICATION...
COMMANDER...

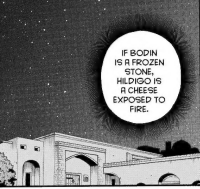
WHAT I MEAN TO SAY, YOUR HIGHNESS...
...IS THAT DEPENDING ON WHAT I REPORT TO HIS HOLINESS THE ARCH-BISHOP...
...YOUR HIGHNESS'S FUTURE MAY BENEFIT AS WELL.

THIS IS MY PERSONAL GIFT OF ALMS TO THE TEMPLARS.

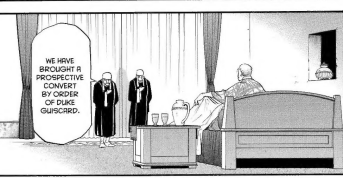
IT PAINS ME FOR IT TO BE SUCH A TRIFLING AMOUNT, BUT MOST OF THE WEALTH SEIZED FROM PARIS IS OVERSEEN BY MY BROTHER AND ARCHBISHOP BODIN, YOU SEE.
THERE WILL BE MORE TO COME, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST OFFERING.

I SEE YOUR HIGHNESS'S GENEROSITY IS NOT MERELY A RUMOR...
MY, MY...

CLINK
CLINK
CLINK
FOR THOSE IN THE CLERGY--
MY TEMPLARS WILL BE AS PLEASED AS I.
WOULD YOU HELP NOT ONLY THE POOR, BUT ALSO THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR WAY FROM THE TEACHINGS OF GOD, COIN-MINDED?
FOR THOSE IN THE CLERGY, EVEN THE FEW COINS NEEDED TO HELP THE POOR DO NOT COME EASILY...
STACK
STACK
STACK
STACK
LATER, I WILL BE SENDING A "PROSPECTIVE CONVERT" TO YOUR LODGING.
I HIGHLY DOUBT THAT BODIN HAS EVER BRIBED HIM.


IF BODIN IS A FROZEN STONE, HILDIGO IS A CHEESE EXPOSED TO FIRE..

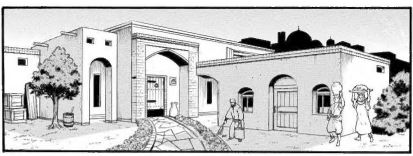
HUFH.
THAT'S BECAUSE HE'S MADE OF FROZEN STONE!


WE HAVE BROUGHT A PROSPECTIVE CONVERT BY ORDER OF DUKE GUISCARD.

THE MAN KNOWN AS HILDIGO IS RIGID ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT SHAMEFULLY FLEXIBLE ON THE INSIDE.

COME IN.

VERY GOOD.



SIR HILDIGO, YOUR BREAKFAST IS READY.

...SIR HILDI-GO?
SIR HILDI-GO?

SIR HILDI-GOOO P